



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

The Rt Hon Claire Perry MP
Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth

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Thank you so much for your letter dated 14th February 2019.

Obligations on energy suppliers have been used successfully for over 20 years as a way of installing domestic energy efficiency measures at scale. Under ECO alone, around 2.5m measures have been installed in around 2m homes. ECO requires measures to be installed under the latest installation standards (PAS2030) and for appropriate guarantees to be provided, which is an improvement on previous schemes. This Government is committed to driving up quality further and will consult later this year on the incorporation of the new Trustmark quality scheme into ECO. This will improve standards of design, installation and consumer care.

Turning to the Green Deal, my department is indeed aware of the issues regarding the company Home Energy & Lifestyle Management Ltd (HELMS). You have mentioned that the Minister for Local Government, Housing and Planning referred to "sub-standard" work carried out by HELMS. Whilst we have had reports and complaints about the standard of work, most complaints have in fact been about mis-selling.

I take very seriously such concerns. There is an established process for handling complaints under the Green Deal, but because of the nature and number of complaints about this particular Green Deal Provider, we have put in place a specific, robust process for handling complaints about HELMS. Where customers believe they have been mis-sold Green Deal Plans they can complain direct to the Green Deal Finance Company (GDFC) who can cancel or reduce loans if the evidence supports this.

Where consumers are not satisfied by GDFC offers, they have the right to refer their complaints to the Secretary of State. Under the Green Deal Framework Regulations, he has the power to reduce or cancel loans where there has been a breach of the relevant rules, and he is satisfied that the consumer has suffered, or is likely to suffer, a substantive loss.

My Department is working to ensure that consumers receive appropriate redress as quickly as possible. I enclose a note which explains to householders what action they can take to seek redress if they believe they were mis-sold a Green Deal Plan by HELMS, which you may wish to offer householders who were HELMS customers.

You may wish to know that we are reviewing the Green Deal. This began with a Call for Evidence, and the summary of responses published last year noted that many stakeholders agreed with the Government's view that the scheme can play a useful role in future. It is worth noting that the majority of Green Deal Plans run smoothly, without complaint, but it is important that we learn lessons from where there have been problems. We will consult before making any changes and make sure that the interests of consumers are foremost.

Thank you again for taking the time to write. I hope you find this information useful.

Yours ever,

THE RT HON CLAIRE PERRY MP
Minister of State

Note for householders who were sold Green Deal Plans by Home Energy & Lifestyle Management Ltd (HELMS)

The Green Deal was launched in 2013 to help consumers fund energy efficiency improvements in their homes: under the scheme, consumers can borrow money to fund improvements and pay back the loans over time through their electricity bills.

Many consumers have benefitted from Green Deal Plans, having had energy efficiency improvements successfully installed in their homes, which are helping to keep their bills down.

But unfortunately, a minority of Green Deals did not go to plan. In particular, many customers of the company **Home Energy & Lifestyle Management Ltd (HELMS)** have complained that they were mis-sold Green Deal Plans. Some also have complaints about the quality of work done.

If you have a Green Deal Plan sold to you by HELMS and feel that it may have been mis-sold, there is action you can take to seek redress.

The Government has worked with other parties to set up a special process for dealing with HELMS complaints (this is outside the standard Green Deal complaints process).

The Green Deal Finance Company (GDFC) reviews complaints about HELMS and, where appropriate, makes settlement offers. If consumers are not satisfied with these offers, they can refer their cases to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) under the Green Deal Regulations. The Secretary of State has the power to reduce or cancel loans where there has been a breach of the relevant rules, and he is satisfied that the consumer has suffered, or is likely to suffer, a substantive loss.

To start the process, contact GDFC:

customerhelp@gdfcassets.org
0330 111 8098

If you have wider questions about the above process, or more generally about the Green Deal, you can contact the Green Deal team at BEIS:

gdconsumers@beis.gov.uk
Green Deal Team, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2nd Floor, Orchard 3, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET.